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Retired Employees Association of Ventura County, Inc.
P O Box 7231, Ventura CA 93006 Telephone: 805/644-7814
“DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY SERVED”
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2013



PRESIDENT’S LETTER
By Art Goulet

The program at the February Member luncheon was quite interesting. It was comprised of presentations by Matt Carroll, Assistant County Executive Officer, and David Grau, President of the Ventura County Taxpayers Association. Unfortunately, Matt experienced some technical difficulties and was unable to use his prepared Power Point slides. Nonetheless, he “soldiered on” and described the areas the county will be attempting to address in negotiations with the various unions to reduce the county’s pension contribution burden and move towards a sharing of costs by current employees. The aim is to get more in line with the cost

sharing required by the Public Employee Pension Reform Act (PEPRA) for new employees who become members of our retirement system after January 1, 2013. Because what the county is attempting to do will have to be accomplished through collective bargaining, Matt was unable to provide us with many specifics, lest he be accused of an unfair labor practice. He did stress, however, that the county had to be careful to avoid becoming an uncompetitive employer as a result of any agreements reached.

David had no technical difficulties, and targeted several areas in current practice he termed “abuses” of the retirement system by employees planning to retire, primarily those covered by legacy Tier 1 and safety plan members. One of the most prominent of these was the ability to sell back annual leave twice in a 12 month period by spanning two calendar years, thereby increasing compensation earnable in the employee’s single highest year which, of course, increases the retirement benefit. Additionally, he was critical of the education incentive and suggested it be done away with, and suggested the county limit any incentive to reimbursement of costs. He also talked about safety compensation, which he alleged was in excess of the norm, and the fact that the number of existing VCERA pensions in excess of \$100,000 and \$200,000 is greater than for other 1937 Act systems on a percentage of retirees basis. He did concede that typical general employee pensions were reasonable, and had no issue with those.

The luncheon meal was very good, especially the main course, which was Chicken Piccata. Afterwards, several members asked if we could obtain the recipe for it. The caterer was kind enough to share it with us, and it is displayed elsewhere in this newsletter.

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In the last newsletter, I mentioned that our Retirement Board was wrestling with what to include in “pensionable compensation”, a new term pertaining only to new employees hired after January 1, 2013. As indicated in the Board of Retirement article herein, the Board has made a tentative decision. This was done on a 5-4 vote, and I cast the deciding vote. (Actually, any one of the 5 votes in favor can be considered the deciding vote). Both the county and the Taxpayers Association argued against the Board decision. I voted as I did because of the disagreements over interpretation of the law, which the Legislature doesn’t seem to be in any hurry to clarify, and because CalPERS issued a circular letter listing the types of other compensation that may be included in pensionable compensation. I believe the issue will either be clarified by the Legislature or by the Courts, although CalPERS has stated they intend to issue clarifying regulations, particularly as to what a publicly available pay schedule is. My rationale for voting the way I did was that it is better to have collected contributions on a higher amount and have to refund the excess, rather than collect contributions on a lower amount and have to try to collect under-payments, depending on what the final determination is.


VCERA has also published its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. If you are interested, you may view it at: <http://portal.countyofventura.org/portal/page/portal/VCERA/Publications/2012-06-30-VCERACAFRRReportWWW.pdf>.

If this newsletter was sent to you by email, you will have received it much earlier than those members who receive it by mail. After the Post Office eliminates Saturday delivery, it will take even longer by mail, so I encourage you to sign up for email delivery. You will also save REAVC money!

The next Member luncheon is on May 7. Don’t forget to make a reservation for the luncheon, and don’t forget to bring a donation for FoodShare. We’ll see if the caterer can do even better than they did on February 5! I look forward to seeing you there.

 *See’s Candy* 
By Linda

GOOD NEWS !!!: For 2013, once again, the See’s Candy gift certificate will be \$13 !!! You can acquire these certificates one of three ways: **they can be purchased at our luncheons, through the mail or by calling 805/644-7814.** To place a mail order, simply mail your request to REAVC, PO Box 7231, Ventura, CA 93006. Be sure to enclose a check made payable to REAVC for the total amount of your purchase, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Please be aware that each certificate weighs just under an ounce (including the very nice gift certificate holder). Some of the larger orders require a larger envelope and the larger envelope postage rate. On the other hand, three certificates without the gift holder only need one stamp. If you do not want the gift certificate holder, please note that when you place your order. 

 **“My wife and I have the secret to making a marriage last. Two times a week, we go to a nice restaurant, a little wine, good food...She goes Tuesdays, I go Fridays.”**

Insurance Benefits Committee Report

By Cindi Mathieu

The Joint Labor-Management Healthcare Committee met on January 17, 2013.

The first agenda item was a report on the second and third quarter Health Net Utilization. There was a 9.2% decrease in Health Net enrollment, a 25% increase in PPO enrollment and 1.74% increase in VCHCP enrollment.

In the third quarter of 2012 there were 2,721 persons enrolled in Health Net and the average age of this group is 36.7 years. Of this group, there were 604 (22%) persons ages 50-59 years; 285 (10%) persons were 60-64 years and 63 (0.02%) persons 65+years.

In the last 12 months, 12,971 people enrolled in Health Net; \$14,553,745 was paid in premiums; \$12,391,608 was paid in claims. \$955.33 was the claims cost per employee. The Loss Ratio (claims divided by premiums) remains at 85.1% which is what the law now allows (\$.85 of each \$1 to claims payment).

Under Health Net the top 5 drugs by paid amount are: Humira, Aciphex, Thalomid, Ability, and Cymbalta. The top 5 drugs by prescription count are: Hydrocodone-Acetaminophen, Levothyroxine Sodium, Lisinopril, Simvastatin, and Metformin HCL.

The second agenda item was a summary presentation of the provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The goal and objective of this law is to improve the public good by providing everyone with health insurance which will spread the costs of healthcare. 50 million Americans have no medical insurance.

Different provisions of this law are and will be enacted at different times. Some provisions are in effect already, the target year is 2014 when insurance becomes available for all people.

Insurance reform includes: no dollar limits on health benefits; adult children can be covered

by parents policy up to age 26 years; no exclusions for preexisting conditions for children under 19 years of age; illegal for an insurance company to rescind care after an illness; changes to close the donut hole in Part D Medicare; and changes to the claims and appeals process.

By the end of this year exchanges will be set up so that individuals and small businesses can buy affordable health benefit plans. Plans will be available with different benefits and different costs. Subsidies will be available to assist people who need it to buy insurance. Tax credits to help middle class families afford insurance will be available to those with income between 100% and 400% of the poverty line who are not eligible for other affordable coverage. Of note, there are 1.9 million Californians who are uninsured.

The third agenda item was an annual report on the county's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which has been offering services to county employees for 28 years. Their goal is to increase the number of employees served by this program and increase workforce integrity. For instance, according to national statistics 5-8% of the population can be described as problem drinkers or substance abusers. Applied to the county workforce this equals about 400 employees who could be so described. The current EAP caseload consists of 3.5% of employees being served. EAP services address mental health, substance abuse and family relations issues. They also hold support groups or workshops for mediations, training, critical incident debriefings and organizational development related consultations.

Should you have questions regarding any of the information in this report please email me at cmathieu_2000@yahoo.com.

RETIREMENT BOARD NEWS
By Art Goulet

At its January 28 meeting, the Board of Retirement formally determined that the change in CPI for the Measurement period was 1.93%, which rounds to 2.0%. Because of existing COLA banks, Tier 1 And safety retirees who retired on or before April 1, 1985, will receive 3%. Because there was no Existing COLA bank for those Tier 1 and safety retirees who retired after April 1, 1985, they will only Receive 2.0%. These increases will show up in the April checks.

After reducing existing banks to provide for these increases, the remaining COLA banks for Tier 1 And safety retirees for 2013 will be:

<u>Date of Retirement</u>	<u>COLA Bank</u>
On or before 4/1/75	56.5%
4/2/75 to 4/1/76	49.0%
4/2/76 to 4/1/77	41.5%
4/2/77 to 4/1/78	38.0%
4/2/78 to 4/1/79	34.0%
4/2/79 to 4/1/80	29.5%
4/2/80 to 4/1/81	21.5%
4/2/81 to 4/1/82	9.0%
4/2/82 to 4/1/83	2.5%
4/2/83 to 4/1/85	0.5%
4/2/85 or later	0.0%

Tier 2 retirees who were represented by SEIU, and who did not withdraw their COLA contributions upon retirement, will receive a 2% COLA on the portion of their pension attributable to their service beginning March 16, 2003, unless they retired prior to March 13, 2005, in which case the 2% COLA will apply to the portion of their pension attributable to service beginning July 7, 2002.

Because of the timing of the Board meetings in January and February, relative to the publishing date of the Newsletter, we don't have any investment information for 2013 yet. However, 2012 closed out well. Both November and December were up months. As of November 30, the system's assets were up to \$3.46 billion from \$3.45 billion at the end of October. As of December 31, the assets had increased to \$3.49 billion. For calendar year 2012, VCERA had earned about 13.8%, as compared to the earnings for fiscal year ending June 30, 2012 of 1.5%.

As you may recall, VCERA executed contracts with Vitech Systems Group early last year to assist VCERA in a phased rollout of a new Pension Administration System (PAS). There have been some bumps along the way, but the project is reasonably close to being on schedule. One of the things VCERA had to do was hire another consultant to convert existing pension data because of shortage of staff to perform the work. This consultant apparently was able to perform this task quite well. Another bump results from the passage of the Public Employee Pension Reform Act late in the last legislative session and the need for the Auditor-Controller (A-C) to implement the new law for both new and current employees (to the limited extent the new law affects them). Couple that with the A-C's extensive involvement in developing a new financial management system for the county, and the A-C is stretched pretty thin, which may affect their response time to the needs of VCERA's PAS effort.

At its December 17 meeting, as part of implementation of PEPRA, the Board tentatively adopted an interpretation of Government Code (GC) Section 7522.34, to include skill-based and service-based pay items in "pensionable compensation," provided those items are not specifically excluded in that section, pending a 60-day waiting period. The waiting period was to allow for additional time to see how other plans, especially CalPERS, will interpret the section in the new law which provides that "pensionable compensation" of a new member of any public retirement system means the normal monthly rate of pay or base pay of the member

paid in cash to similarly situated members of the same group or class of employment for services rendered on a full-time basis during normal working hours, pursuant to publicly available pay schedules. There is a disagreement among systems, and between some systems and labor unions, over whether or not the Legislature intended to exclude regular, recurring skill-based and service-based pay, if those items weren't explicitly excluded in the law.

The Actuarial Valuation for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2012 was considered and approved by the Board on January 28. The Board also set a three-year phase-in of the portion of county contribution rates attributable to previously approved changes in certain economic and demographic assumptions previously approved, to alleviate the substantial impact of these changes on county finances, as well as the total required contribution rates. Additionally, it received the recommended contribution rates pertaining to new employees hired after January 1, 2013 from the actuary, and will decide upon them on February 25.

The actuarial valuation revealed that the unfunded accrued actuarial liability (UAAL) increased from \$775M as of June 30, 2001 to \$976M as of June 30, 2012, virtually all of which increase is attributable to the assumption changes mentioned above. As a result of the increase in UAAL, the "funded ratio" of the system decreased from 80.6% to 77.7%. This should not be of concern, since it doesn't really measure the financial health of the pension plan. That depends on many factors, particularly the size of any shortfall compared with the resources of the plan sponsor. As an indicator, Ventura County was just given an implied General Obligation rating of AA+, just a notch below the highest achievable rating. This rating reflects the county's sound financial condition, years of operational surpluses, prudent expenditure reductions, and a significant degree of remaining expenditure flexibility.



Luncheons & Programs By Ray Holzer

Hope you all enjoyed our February luncheon, I know I did! The food, which is always great, seemed even better than usual. The recipe for that great chicken dish follows.

If you missed the luncheon, you will have another chance on May 7th. Details to follow in our next newsletter.



Apparently the main course for our February 5th Luncheon was a great success and many were requesting the recipe, so...here goes the recipe for *Chicken Piccata* compliments of Scofield Catering:

Dip Chicken Breasts in seasoned flour, then beaten egg, then the flour again. Fry them in hot oil until golden brown. Put them in a casserole dish and set aside. For 4 Chicken Breasts: 1 Stick of butter , 1/4 cup lemon juice, 1/4 cup of capers, 1/4 tsp. salt optional, 1/4 tsp black pepper, 1/4 cup chopped parsley, 2 cloves sliced garlic. Melt the butter and add the rest of the above ingredients and cook for 1 minute. Pour over the fried chicken breasts. Cover with foil and place in oven at 350 degrees and cook for 20 minutes. Then serve!

We are very thankful for the scholarship that the Association awarded to my Grand Daughter Hannah Griffith. To all of those involved in the selection process we are wishing you a Happy new year!
Thanks Again
Michael & Delores Griffith

If you have given us your email address and you are not receiving the newsletter, please email your current email address to lindaedra5@yahoo.com We use YahooGroup to manage our newsletter emailing process. You must respond to an invitation from REAVC YahooGroup before your newsletter can be sent to you via email.

SURVIVORS: The surviving spouse of a member is eligible for Association Membership. To enroll, send completed application to: REAVC, PO Box 7231, Ventura, CA 93006.

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The above is a thank you note sent to REAVC by Michael and Delores Griffith on behalf of their granddaughter Hannah. Hannah recently was a recipient of our John MacIntyre Scholarship program.

**CONTACT NEWSLETTER
CHAIRPERSON**

Members are encouraged to submit their views, comments, articles, cartoons and photos pertinent to REAVC issues. You must include your name so we can verify your membership, but it will be withheld if you so request. Please email your submissions to lindaedra5@yahoo.com



A wife asked her husband:
"What do you like most in me,
my pretty face or my sexy
body?"

He looked at her from head to
toe and replied: "I like your
sense of humor."



IN MEMORIAM

This information was not available prior to publishing the newsletter.

CRCEA
California Retired County Employees Association
By Betty McCollum

Here it is the New Year and time to get busy with what is happening and what has already happened. As you know, another great conference was attended by your delegates, Betty McCollum, Alternate Ron Janes, and Will Hoag, in October with Stanislaus/Modesto hosting. Modesto is called the "Home of American Graffiti" and celebrated their 50th Anniversary with some old cars that used to run up and down their streets. Chris Murphy, Publisher of the Modesto View Magazine, gave a very interesting talk on the movie that George Lucas made to pay homage to his hometown.

Stanislaus/Modesto had interesting speakers that were very formable and the audience participated with many questions being asked and answered regarding the update on SB 1234, the Affordable Health Care Act.

Now we are getting ready for our Los Angeles Conference to be held at the Maya Hotel Hilton (formally the Hyatt), 700 Queensway Drive, Long Beach, April 15 thru the 17th, hosted

by Retired Employees of Los Angeles County. Looking for Ventura retirees to attend this one since it is close to home. You can plan a mini vacation. Their conference committee has planned several things that will be fun and exciting. So pack your suitcase for that mini vacation. From what we are hearing we will be having fun, fun.

October 20 thru 23 will bring us to the fall conference which will be in the big city of Fresno at the Radisson Hotel, 2233 Ventura Street. The Fresno County Retirees are planning their festivities also so you see you can make at least one of our CRCEA Conferences.

Our conferences are held to give the 20 counties the information that lots of times we don't get to hear. We strive to give our retirees the information that will benefit them and information they can take back to their associations.



CONTACT NEWSLETTER CHAIRPERSON

Members are encouraged to submit their views, comments, articles, cartoons and photos pertinent to REAVC issues. You must include your name so we can verify your membership, but it will be withheld if you so request. Please email your submissions to lindaedra5@yahoo.com

“Love is, above all, the gift of oneself.”

...Jean Anouilh

**RETIRED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION OF VENTURA COUNTY
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN REAVC
And Authorization for Deduction of Dues**

I hereby authorize the Ventura County Employees' Retirement Association (VCERA) to deduct from my retirement check, on behalf of REAVC, dues in the amount of \$1.50 unless and until such authorization is cancelled in writing by me.

Print

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone No: (____) _____ County Dept: _____
Email: _____ Yes, newsletter via email
Spouse's Name: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Dues and contributions to REAVC are not tax deductible as charitable donations.

REAVC telephone: 805/644-7814

New Board Member JOHN COUSHAY

As a new board member let me introduce myself. My name is John Coushay. I was born and raised in Southern California and come from a family of Public Servants, mainly school teachers. Though I was not a very good student I went on to college earning a degree in Fire Science. My father was a senior Public Works Inspector and his father was a Los Angeles City school teacher.

My wife and I moved to Ventura County in 1962 and for the last 44 years have resided in Newbury Park, where we raised our two children. Our daughter has been employed at UC Santa Barbara for the last 20 years and lives in Ventura. Our son resides out of state and is self-employed. He competed in the 2010 World Master Track and Field competition in Finland where he won a Bronze Medal in the Decathlon.

My general interests include foreign travel; I'm also a memorabilia collector of sorts and am a very big New York Yankee baseball fan.

I began working for the County of Ventura in 1966 and retired from the Ventura County Fire District in 1989 as a captain. During my tenure with the Fire Department I served on the Board of Directors of Local 1364. I worked another ten years as a part time employee for a local city's Planning Department.

My goals as a REAVC Board Member would be to increase our membership numbers. I have been told we have 5,658 Retired Members and Beneficiaries of which 50% are dues paying members. With our dues being only \$1.50 a month, I would hope we can increase our membership. As we enter this New Year, the issues confronting Public Retirement Systems will be with us for some time. Only through a strong and united effective voice, can we represent Ventura County Retirees' vested benefits.

NEW RETIREES

William J. Ackerman	Fire Protection District	
Robert R. Ameche	Fire Protection District	
Adele A. Beardsley	County Counsel	
James R. Biermann	Sheriff	
Karen J. Block-Davis	District Attorney	
Dea S. Boehme	Sheriff	
Susan L. Bollinger	HCA	
Frederick F. Bryant	Sheriff	
Sharyl R. Burke	Public Defender	
Carmen F. Castaneda	HSA	
Scott Chamness	HCA	Enjoy !
Susan Chavez	HSA	
Linda Clayton	Sheriff	
Daniel J. Cutcher	Library Services Agency	Relax !
Vera C. Dominguez	HCA	
Joseph Evans	Sheriff	Play !
Gary E. Garcia	Superior Courts	
Richard W. Hamilton	Sheriff	
Don R. Hansen	Treasurer Tax Collector	HAVE
Virginia L. Iverson	HCA	FUN !
Melinda Kaihara-Norcott	Fire Protection District	
Craig P. Koemer	Animal Regulation	
Thomas E. LaMasney	GSA	Play !
Treka D'Aun Laviada	Sheriff	
Janice L. McGarry	AAA	Relax !
Patricia M. Murphy	District Attorney	
Jeffrey Norcott	Fire Protection District	
Ray A. Rangel	Public Works	Enjoy !
Steven D. Rhods	Sheriff	
Susan J. Saraceno	HCA	
Deborah Y. Smith	HSA	
Hector A. Solorzano	Assessor	
Brian D. Stachkunas	Auditor-Controller	
Ronald S. Tindle	Resource Mgmt	
Deborah J. Troncale	Sheriff	
Sandra K. Ullrich	District Attorney	
Sheree L. Virs	GSA	
Pamela S. Waldron	HSA	
Sharon K. Wells	HAS	

**“IN THE OLD DAYS A
MAN WHO SAVED
MONEY WAS A MISER;
NOWADAYS HE’S A
WONDER.”**

Author Unknown

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<p><u>JANUARY</u></p> <p>8-REAVC Board Meeting 7-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 28-Board of Retirement Business Mtg 30-Reservation cut off date for next luncheon</p>	<p><u>FEBRUARY</u></p> <p>4-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 5-General Membership Luncheon 8-Articles Due 25-Board of Retirement Business Mtg</p>	<p><u>MARCH</u></p> <p>4-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 5-REAVC Board Meeting 18-Board of Retirement Business Mtg</p>
<p><u>APRIL</u></p> <p>1-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 5-Articles Due 15-Board of Retirement Business Mtg 24-Reservation cut-off date for next luncheon</p> <p>REAVC Board – No Meeting</p>	<p><u>MAY</u></p> <p>6-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 7-General Membership Luncheon 20-Board of Retirement Business Mtg</p> <p>REAVC Board – No Meeting</p>	<p><u>JUNE</u></p> <p>3-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 4-REAVC Board Meeting 7-Articles Due 17-Board of Retirement Business Mtg</p>
<p><u>JULY</u></p> <p>1-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 5-Scholarship apps due for Sept Luncheon 15-Board of Retirement Business Mtg</p> <p>REAVC Board – No Meeting</p>	<p><u>AUGUST</u></p> <p>2-Articles Due 6-REAVC Board Meeting 28-Reservations cut-off date for next luncheon</p> <p>Board of Retirement – no meeting</p>	<p><u>SEPTEMBER</u></p> <p>3-Gen. Membership Luncheon (scholarships awarded) 9-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 16-Board of Retirement Business Mtg</p> <p>REAVC Board – No Meeting</p>
<p><u>OCTOBER</u></p> <p>1-REAVC Board Meeting 4-Articles Due 7-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 11-Scholarship apps due for Dec Luncheon 21-Board of Retirement Business Mtg</p>	<p><u>NOVEMBER</u></p> <p>4-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 18-Board of Retirement Business Mtg 27-Reservations cut-off date for next luncheon</p> <p>REAVC BOARD – No Meeting</p>	<p><u>DECEMBER</u></p> <p>2-Board of Retirement Disability Mtg 3-General Membership Luncheon (Scholarships awarded) 10-REAVC Board Meeting 13-Articles Due 16-Board of Retirement Business Mtg</p>

11 February 2013



Be sure to note on your 2013 calendar the dates of our luncheons and the cut-off dates for reservations.



2013 REAVC BOARD OFFICERS

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Treasurer – Ray Holzer	805/644-3702	rayholzer2@aol.com
Past Pres – Wayne Larroque	805/659-5700	xlcajun@gmail.com

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When sending an email to the Board and/or Association Officers, please be sure to put REAVC in the subject line.

REAVC

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Ventura CA 93006

**RETURN ADDRESS
REQUESTED**